



GIVE TOGETHER LUNCHEON



KWT Inc.
Update Report 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

OF COUNTRY & FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

The Committee of Koondée Woonga-gat Toor-rong acknowledges the Wurundjeri Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we do our work. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge their continued connection to land and water, and for sharing their country with us.

We also acknowledge Traditional Custodians of other Kulin Nations, we pay respects to their Elders past and present, and acknowledge their continued connection to land and water. We also acknowledge the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Victoria, we pay our respects to their Elders and ancestors.

PARTNERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Koondée Woonga-gat Toor-rong acknowledges the ongoing allyship and support of the Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership, the Paul Ramsay Foundation and Australian Communities Foundation. This event was made possible with the support and allyship from these organisations.

ABOUT KOONDEE WOONGA-GAT TOOR-RONG (KWT)

Koondée Woonga-gat Toor-rong (KWT) is a First Nations led philanthropic community fund based in Narm (Melbourne), Victoria.

KWT is committed to delivering philanthropy services that align to and progress the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members residing in Victoria.

We walk in this world by providing our allies in the philanthropy community with an opportunity to work with us in deconstructing grantmaking processes and support a more grassroots grants process that is accessible to First Nations communities in Victoria.

OUR VISION

Empowering Victorian First Nations' Communities Together through philanthropy.

KWT PURPOSE

- Engage communities and philanthropic organisations through empowerment.
- Diversify the funding resources available to communities.
- Extend the impact of philanthropic organisations in Australia.
- Celebrate being a precedent-setting First Nations grantmaking organisation.
- Facilitate self-determination through philanthropy, gifting, learning and reciprocity.
- Communicate our successes and lessons learnt through First Nations led philanthropic giving.



OVERVIEW

GIVE TOGETHER LUNCHEON

Koondie Woonga-gat Toor-rong (KWT) started 2024 with its inaugural Give Together Luncheon held in February at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. Bringing together members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the Philanthropy Community.

The theme of the luncheon 'Decolonising Philanthropy' was more a challenge to look at processes and current practices within the Philanthropy Community, that are barriers to First Nations individuals and groups seeking access to grants. As well as building understanding of First Nations giving space. Furthermore, it was an opportunity for all attending to learn about KWT, our strategic priority areas and our commitment to building strong sustainable partnerships for change, that are impactful and continue to uphold the strong legacy of giving that KWT stands on.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Speakers at the Luncheon offered diverse views on grant seeking, barriers with understanding philanthropic language and challenging terminologies such as 'decolonising'. Furthermore guests spoke about what it means to engage with a First Nations led granting organisation and the opportunities it offers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, groups and clubs across Victoria to access grants in a culturally informed process, that builds confidence and trust.

Speakers included keynote from Ian Hamm, panel speakers Shantelle Thompson and Peter Aldenhoven, Jeremy Burke and Terori Hareko-Avaivilla honouring the late John Burke and members of Towards A Just Society. Kath Coff and Deb Wash, KWT committee members sharing insights to our commitment as a small First Nations granting organisation and our hopes for the KWT giving space, Philanthropy and First Nations Communities across Victoria.

We live in post-referendum world; where does it leave us; what is the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia? No denying it has changed, but changed to what is the big question. And it affects everyone, no-one can run from that. This includes entities such as government, business and industry, community service providers and, of course, philanthropy.

The big question is "where do we go from here?" and "what are the future reference points that we go forward with?" In this unsurety, it is easy to fall back to safety, the safety of those things we know or think we know.

Ian Hamm, Keynote Speaker, Give Together Luncheon, 2024

DECOLONISING PHILANTHROPY

IS DECOLONISING THE RIGHT WORD?

'Decolonising' seems to be a buzz word that is used springly across sectors including the philanthropy sector, yet we have not come together to really understand what this means and who is 'decolonising' what?

As Victoria's First Nations led granting organisation, the terminology puts up barriers for KWT to build sustainable partnerships that encourages collaboration, build cultural undersatnding and seek appropriate processes for grant making.



Philanthropy uses language that is often not welcoming of First Nations community members, and this has over time made it incredibly hard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians to seek philanthropic grants with confidence.

Terori Hareko-Avaivilla, General Manager | KWT

How we use language and terminology is important when we are engaging with First Nations communities. 'Decolonising' is a terminology that comes from academia and offers a blanket definition to its use without clarity on how it is applied or used within the First Nations context.

In this instance for KWT, the terminology offers an 'us and them' statement that does not align with our organisations name KOONDEE WOONGA-GAT TOOR-RONG, meaning to give together. And our work as a granting organisation that seeks collaboration, networks and partnerships to walk with us in our giving space and be part of purposeful change.



'Perhaps the way forward is not to decolonise, but to understand each other better'

Ian Hamm, Keynote Speaker, Give Together Luncheon, 2024



PANEL DISCUSSION

PROCESS AND PRACTICE: CHANGING THE WAY WE GIVE TOGETHER

As a small granting organisation, it is important for KWT to continue to provide a culturally safe space for First Nations communities to engage with confidence in our KWT granting processes. It is also important that we are hearing what our community needs are and how we respond is crucial to building trust.

And part of building that trust and understanding is hearing from current and former KWT grantees offering their thoughts on KWT granting and reporting processes. And their experiences with trying to access philanthropic grants generally.

'Yes, those who obtain philanthropic funds do have [to] report on outcomes and achievements. Equally, the provider of funds shouldn't make the application and reporting process so hard, bureaucratic and, quite frankly, torturous, that it is just plain not worth it'.

Ian Hamm, Keynote Speaker, Give Together Luncheon, 2024

Peter Aldenhoven, informed the room that KWT provided an easy grant application process that removed barriers as well as making the reporting process easy for community to tell their story. Shantelle Thompson informed her struggle with building a First Nations foundation that supports young people with staying connected to culture and the lack of funds required to maintain their programs and doors open. Having accessed a community grant from KWT meant that she was able to run programs for the young people in her community and keeping them off the streets and out of trouble.



Panel Speakers: Peter Aldenhoven & Shantelle Thompson

HONOURING OUR LEGACY

TOWARDS A JUST SOCIETY (TJS)

KWT inherited a strong foundation of giving, social justice and fair access to grants. And we continue to build on this legacy through the work we undertake, the projects we collaborate with, and the engagements we have with our First Nations communities across Victoria.

KWT's origin story is one of allyship and trust, with a shared vision to give together to the First Nations communities across Victoria. The members of TJS reached out to the First Nations community regarding transferring their remaining funds over to a First Nations led community fund. An initial committee was set up to carry out the work of setting this foundation up and ensuring that we journeyed together to establish a fund that honoured both members of TJS and what is now KWT.

We had the honour of having Jeremy Burke, son of the late John Burke who was a strong ally of KWT and member of TJS. Jeremy shared his father's passion for philanthropy and this work over the years to give back to the First Nations communities in Victoria.

KWT continues to honour the legacy of members of TJS by ensuring our First Nations led giving space is always in collaboration, and honours our journey to give together.



Guest Speaker: Jeremy Burke, honouring his late father John Burke and members of Towards A Just Society.

OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER

SOME IMAGES FROM THE LUNCHEON



FUNDS RAISED

GIVE TOGETHER LUNCHEON FUNDRAISING

The inaugural Give Together Luncheon was an opportunity to showcase the work of KWT Inc. It was also an invitation for future collaborators and funders to build a relationship with KWT through our work to provide fair and culturally informed practices and access to grants.

As a small First Nations granting organisation, we don't want to be bystanders in wealth creation to extend our granting pool. We are committed to taking an active role to find creative ways to raise funds that contribute and support First Nations cultural and community initiatives.

As such the Give Together Luncheon was a community event with the hope that it will become KWT's annual fundraiser luncheon event. With our inaugural luncheon event we were able to raise a small amount of funds which will support the work we do.

Funds Raised From Event	\$5750
Inkind support / sponsorship	\$6800
Total Event Budget	\$37,167



Esso to our partners:



KWT committee and Management: From back, L-R: Sherree Chaudhry, Marie Murfet, Kath Coff, Jacqui Watkins, Terori HA and Deb Walsh.